

Human Relations News

from the

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

LEO P. CARLIN, MAYOR

An official agency created by the Newark Fair Practice Ordinance to carry out the State policy against discrimination based on race, color, creed or national origin.

Room 214, City Hall, Newark, Mitchell 3-6300, Ext. 281

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A bi-monthly summary of facts and trends in human relations and civil rights

March 1958

COLLIER APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF PATERSON COMMISSION

Chairman Benjamin A. Collier resigned as executive secretary of the Urban League of Eastern Union County to accept the position of executive director of the Commission on Human Relations in Paterson, New Jersey, effective April 1st.

Mr. Collier will bring many years of experience and knowledge to his new position. He has been with the Union County Urban League for more than four years, having previously served five years as industrial relations secretary of the Urban League of Essex County. Mr. Collier was appointed to the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations in 1955 and was elected vice-chairman. He was elected chairman in June, 1957, succeeding C. Willard Heckel.

The Paterson Commission is one of the 12 municipal agencies in New Jersey which are appointed by the local mayors and administrators under the authority of the Anti-Discrimination Law. It was originally formed in 1949, consisting of a board of 7 persons who are representative of the population of Paterson. Mr. Collier will be the first full time director.

The members and staff of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations salute the City of Paterson for their forward step into the field of intergroup relations and we extend best wishes for success to our chairman, Benjamin A. Collier, as director of a sister agency.

Integrated Housing — Number One Challenge To American Communities Today

Algermon D. Black, leader of the New York Society for Ethical Culture and chairman of the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, addressed the annual Brotherhood Month public meeting of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations on February 26th. Mr. Black entitled his talk, "Housing — The Number One Challenge to the American Community Pattern."

Quoted below are just a few of the informative and significant remarks which he presented to this meeting:

"Housing is the key to much of the inequality and the division among our people. Housing is a basic necessity, as essential as water and milk and bread. Equal access to housing, whether apartments in multiple dwellings or home ownership in housing developments, is a basic necessity for a healthy individual

and a healthy and happy life. Discrimination and segregation in housing permeate all the areas of segregation, make it impossible for neighbors to know one another, and breed distrust, fear, bitterness and hatred. The fruits of such segregation are costly in terms of disease, crime, mental illness and intergroup conflict. From a humanitarian point of view and from a financial point of view, the American people can no longer afford to live this way."

"Men of good will are searching for a community in which all will share in freedom and equality. The movement for integration is the affirmation of all that is good in religion and in the democratic promise. Those who feel that they can live up to their religious principles and to democratic principles without striving for integration are feeling themselves, they are being false to their own most sacred values."

"We are all besought up with prejudices. It is our responsibility and our duty to try to outgrow them, to reach out to other people, to try to understand them. Where we think that any group has fixed characteristics, we have to be honest and courageous enough to try to find out whether these characteristics that we do not like are due to inheritance or to environmental factors. Most of the traits that we attribute to other minorities are due to ourselves, to the fact that we have permitted the conditions under which it was impossible for these people to fulfill their own possibilities. No group is better than any other group; and no group is worse than any other group. This is a basic

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Benjamin A. Collier

MAYOR LEO P. CARLIN AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL HONORED

At its Brotherhood Month meeting, the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations presented tributes to Mayor Leo P. Carlin and each member of the City Council for their wisdom and concern for the general welfare of this community as demonstrated by the approval of the Commission's survey of intergroup relations and changing neighborhoods.

These citations read as follows:

THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS is observing Brotherhood Month, February, 1958 Pays Sincere Tribute to THE CITY COUNCIL for approving and supporting a scientifically controlled survey of intergroup relations and changing neighborhoods, thereby making Newark, New Jersey, the first city in America to undertake such research. This Commission and the citizens of Newark honor you for upholding The Brotherhood of Man Under the Fatherhood of God and for promoting peaceful community relations and harmonious intergroup fellowship among the diverse Religious, Racial and Ethnic groups which make up our City.

* * *

THE MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS is observing Brotherhood Month, February, 1958 with sincere commendation and gratitude, Pays Tribute to MAYOR LEO P. CARLIN for initiating a scientifically controlled survey of group relations and changing neighborhoods thereby making Newark, New Jersey, the first city in America to undertake such research. We honor you for considering the humanitarian interests of the community is planning for "The New Newark". Your Commission and the people of "Our Town" thank you for exemplifying The Brotherhood of Man Under the Fatherhood of God and setting the pattern for harmonious intergroup fellowship and peaceful community relations among the many Religious, Racial and Ethnic Groups which make up our City.

NEW FILMS ON HOUSING PREVIEWED

One of the major aspects of the problem in dealing with changing neighborhoods and discrimination in housing is the need for new films which can be used by interested groups in the discussion of the situation. Brant Cooper-Smith, Regional Director, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, introduced two fine ones to a small group of Human Relations agency Executives last week. They are "Crisis in Levittown" and "All the Way Home."

The first deals with the recent flare-up which occurred in Levittown, Pennsylvania, when a Negro family moved into the community and, using a "See It Now" documentary approach, with Dr. Dan Dodson of New York University acting as narrator, presents the problem in a manner which challenges the audience to provide some of the answers. The second film uses a dramatic format, utilizing the services of professional actors to explore the anguished reaction of a community faced with the possibility of the color-barrier being broken by the sale of a home to the neighborhood to a Negro family. Various prototypes of members of the community are examined for a key to the basis of opposition by different segments of the population reviewing in the process some of the most cherished myths concerning the "dangers" inherent in integration.

The members of the group who saw these films rated them excellent. It was felt that an effort should be made to call these films to the attention of the widest number of potential users in terms of community, religious, and educational organizations. A committee was formed to establish procedures and techniques for previewing these films before specific groups and audiences.

If your organization is interested in a discussion program utilizing one or both of these films, contact Brant Cooper-Smith, 30 Clifton Street, Newark, N. J. Phone Market 3-6241.

Integrated Housing

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assumption of democratic life and democratic faith."

"No intelligent and honest person can deny that there are difficulties in achieving a democratic community. We must use all the instrumentalities to educate ourselves and others to establish and secure and guarantee basic rights by legislation and by administrative policy and a firm adherence to the principles which are the most precious part of the American heritage."



Mayor Leo P. Carlin receives a citation from Commissioner Marion P. Merrill at the Brotherhood Month meeting held in the City Council Chamber. The Mayor and City Commissioners were honored by the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations for their support of the Commission's survey in intergroup relations and changing neighborhoods.

THE PEOPLE TAKE THE LEAD

In the summer of 1957, the citizens on a block of S. 17th St., Newark, a middle-class, residential area, experienced what is known as scare strategy practiced by some unethical real estate agents. These are pressure tactics directed toward creating an atmosphere of panic and promoting the quick sale of homes in neighborhoods into which one or two minority group families have moved. In areas where this practice is permitted to happen, this panic-selling usually means a considerable loss to the home-owner and a substantial profit to the real estate agent.

In many instances, the residents of a neighborhood or block do not give in to such pressure but join forces to resist these appeals and to stabilize their neighborhood. The initiative for such action might be taken by outside agencies, local community groups or by private citizens interested in their neighborhood and the improvement of intergroup relations. This was the approach of two of the senior residents on the block of a Clinton Hill neighborhood who waged a door-to-door campaign to discourage any panic-selling or flight from the neighborhood.

Along with these face-to-face conversations, Mrs. Anne M. Burns and Mrs. Pauline Von Busch distributed an open letter to the residents and neighbors of S. 17th St. This letter read in part:

"Don't listen to smooth talking real estate agents with their scare tactics. You may think you are offered a good price, but when you look around and hear the prices, you'll realize that the offer wasn't so good after all. Most homes on our block are well built and well kept, since the owners generally live in them.

Most new houses are small, many without collars or attics. Think of the many uses for recreation, laundry, workshop, and storage space they provide. When this section of Clinton Hill was built about fifty years ago, our block was restricted to one and two family dwellings. Home building ceased when our boys were called to war. Many of these married girls from overseas and brought them to modern new quarters.

At least three families have lived on our block more than fifty years, some forty-five, some thirty-five, and many twenty-five years and over. My mother

bought our house forty years ago. Two years ago when she died I inherited it. My children suggested selling our house to buy a small, modern home in a new development. But after thinking of the years spent in my house, I decided leaving it and my neighbors on our well kept block. No matter how high a price offered, nothing could soothe that homesick feeling for my home, with memories so dear to my heart. Like a marriage pact, you and your home are joined together "till death do you part."

Just because a few Negro families bought homes and moved into our block is no reason for panic. These Negro people, our new neighbors, are respectable and can afford to live in a middle class neighborhood like ours. Let us accept our new neighbors, like we have all others in the past, and learn to live together. These stories of declining real estate values have been spread by advertising real estate agents for the very purpose of pressuring people to sell their homes, but the facts in the matter are just the opposite.

Since we are all God's children, let us make it and keep it a pleasant and friendly interracial neighborhood."

Mrs. Anne M. Burns,
332 South 17th Street

An interested core of people responded to this approach and they have since formed a block organization as an affiliate of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council.

For a more detailed account of the South 17th Street Story, contact Mrs. Burns or Mrs. Pauline Von Busch, 331 S. 17th St.

SELECTED READING

Alphonsi, Ed. J. *Senas and Nansana about Race, Friendship Press, New York, 1957* (limited edition). "Excellent pamphlet geared at the senior high school group, but equally suitable for adults, which presents facts in place of false or distorted information on race."

Adams, Harry S. *An Epiphany for Dixie*. Norton, 1958. "A white Southerner explains the middle ground for race relations."

Baker, S. J. *Economics of discrimination: an economic view of racial discrimination*. University of Chicago, 1957. "Economic effects of discrimination against the Negroes in the United States in terms of wage rates, and income."

Dykeman, Wilma and Stakely, Janet. *Neither Black nor White*. Bantam, 1957. "Authors travel through South learning the varied attitudes of Southerners on the many aspects of the interracial issue."

Gilbert, Arthur and Torrey, Oscar. *Your Neighbor Celebrates*. Jewish holidays and traditions in America. Friendly House Publishers, 1957. "A simple, easy-to-read type, the book describes the history of the synagogue, Jewish beliefs, customs and holidays."

Shaffer, Helen B. *Residential Segregation*. Editorial Research Reports, Vol. I, Jan. 13, 1958. Contains facts to combat discrimination in housing, racial trends in city living patterns, attitudes toward residential integration.

New Jersey Library Association. *Who cares about human relations?* Sumner Press, 1957. "A selective and critical bibliography deeply concerned with the human relations of family, community, ethnic and racial groups, religion, education, business and industry . . ."

Elizabeth Commission Formed

The growing family of municipal agencies on human relations has been increased by the formation of the Mayor's Commission on Human Relations of Elizabeth, New Jersey. The Commission officially began operation on January 1, 1958. Milton B. Levin, an attorney, was elected chairman. Address: Mayor's Commission on Human Relations, Mayor's Office, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

ONE DAY CONFERENCE

Sponsored by

The Associated Community Councils of Newark

Theme: "Community Councils—Citizens in Action"

Place: Main Park Hotel,
16 Park Place, Newark, N. J.

Date: Saturday, April 19, 1958

Time: 9 A. M. — 3 P. M.

Cost: Registration, Coffee Break
and Lunch — \$2.00

This Conference is not only designed for leaders and members of Community Councils but also for any citizen interested in learning about the organization and operation of councils. Workshop techniques of free and open discussion will be utilized to afford each person an opportunity to present and share information with other participants.

Address all inquiries to:

ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY COUNCILS

156 Broad Street, Newark, N. J.

Phone: Market 3-8039

Mayor's Commission To Circulate Fair Election Campaign Pledge Among Candidates

On May 13 the citizens of Newark will go to the polls to vote for candidates for Mayor and Council. This will be Newark's second election under the Mayor-Council form of government and shapes up as a tight contest. As of March 18 there are 74 candidates in the field of contenders which gives some indication of the high interest and importance associated with this election.

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, at its last regular meeting, voted to circulate among the 74 candidates, a Fair Election Campaign Pledge which puts each candidate on record to oppose a campaign which makes an appeal to racial, religious or nationality prejudice. The Commission circulated a similar pledge with great success during the 1954 campaign. A report on the

return of the signed pledges will be made public.

The Pledge reads as follows:

I believe in the principles set forth in the Commission's Bill of Rights, the provisions of the New Jersey State Law Against Discrimination, and the Newark Fair Practices Ordinance.

Therefore, as a candidate for office in the coming election, I hereby pledge to conduct my campaign in an unbiased, honorable manner.

I further pledge that I shall not seek to discredit other candidates because of their race, religion or national origin; that I shall appeal to the people only as voters of Newark; and finally, I shall not falsely accuse other candidates of discriminatory acts or statements against any minority.

Interviewing of Newark Community Survey Begins

On March 31 the field work of the survey of Newark's changing neighborhoods will begin. This will consist of individual home interviews to be conducted by professionally trained, experienced interviewers. Four thousand interviews will be taken to assure a sampling of a representative number of persons to be reached in each neighborhood in the City of Newark.

The purposes of this survey are to ascertain the key problems and areas of intergroup relations as related to stable, changing or changed neighborhoods; to measure the beliefs and feelings that people have about the different groups that constitute the city's population and to formulate a program of education and action to meet the needs of any problem situation.

The interviewers will be utilizing a questionnaire which was devised by Market Planning Corporation, the agency conducting the study, with the advice of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations and a Technical Advisory Committee, consisting of sociologists and psychologists from local universities and the executives of local intergroup relations agencies.

The interviewers will visit homes during early evening hours and will bear official credentials of identification issued by Market Planning Corporation and the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. Each respondent is asked to be frank and open for the interview is conducted in complete anonymity.

We are asking your full cooperation in this all important project designed to make Newark the leader among cities in the United States in the area of intergroup relations.

If you have any further question concerning this Survey, please feel free to contact this office.



Waller D. Chambers, Assistant Director, Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, Mrs. Suzanne Strass, Field Interviewer and Frank Greenstein, Project Director of Market Planning Corp., review plans for the field work of the community survey.

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

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